



Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study

Champion®

The Dishwashing Machine Specialists

Overview

Country or Region: USA

Industry: Manufacturing—Appliances

Customer Profile

Champion Industries is a midsize manufacturer of commercial dishwashers, glass washers, and related products. Headquartered in Winston-Salem, NC, Champion has a second division in Ontario, Canada.

Business Situation

Champion Industries was unable to obtain adequate support—which was both costly and difficult to find—with the existing enterprise resource planning product, BPCS. The company needed a more reliable product with better support.

Solution

Champion Industries replaced BPCS with Microsoft Dynamics™ AX running in-house on Windows Server® 2003 and Microsoft® SQL Server™ 2000.

Benefits

- Reliable
- Efficient
- Adaptable

Manufacturing Company Increases Productivity While Managing Risk

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Jack O’Connor, Director of Planning and Technology, Champion Industries

Champion Industries is a global supplier of commercial dishwashers and related products. Amid growing concerns about the reliability of the company’s aging enterprise resource planning system, as well as the availability and cost of support, Champion undertook an evaluation to determine a successor. According to Jack O’Connor, Director of Planning and Technology for Champion Industries, support was getting harder to find. Implementing a reliable and effective solution was imperative. In cooperation with Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner Sunrise Technologies, Champion Industries deployed Microsoft Dynamics™ AX to manage critical aspects of the business, including finance, manufacturing, and supply chain management. Microsoft Dynamics AX provided the support and reliability Champion needed with the flexibility to include more advanced capabilities as the company grows and expands.

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Situation

Champion Industries is a subsidiary of the Ali Group, an international commercial food service equipment company based in Milan, Italy. Champion has been providing commercial dishwashing equipment to restaurants, hospitals, hotels, schools, and correctional facilities for more than a hundred years. Champion has earned a reputation as “The Dishwashing Machine Specialists” and is devoted to excellence in its products, manufacturing, sales, and service.

Champion relies on its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to help manage finances, manufacturing, and the supply chain. Because Champion relies so heavily on this single system, Jack O’Connor, Director of Planning and Technology for Champion Industries, has conducted an annual study the past six years to assess the effectiveness and reliability of the ERP system and to determine the need for a product successor.

The latest study O’Connor completed revealed some serious concerns about the existing product, Business Planning and Control System (BPCS), developed and managed by System Software Associates (SSA). When implemented in 1989, BPCS offered all of the capabilities and functionality Champion needed. But with the latest study, it became clear that BPCS was living on borrowed time. “We realized BPCS was unable to match our business requirements. When the company that licensed the product went bankrupt, it signaled BPCS’s demise. We needed to find a more reliable solution,” recalls O’Connor.

Solution

O’Connor reviewed 30 different solutions to determine the best next step. He narrowed his list to two applications that would be acceptable based on criteria that included features, support, and reliability: QAD’s

MFG/PRO eB2.1 System and Microsoft Dynamics™ AX. He also considered sticking with BPCS and bringing the applications, operations, and support in-house. In the end, the company chose Microsoft Dynamics AX, based not only on functionality and reliability but also on the Microsoft® reputation and the availability of certified partners to assist with deployment and provide ongoing support. Champion selected Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000 as the database platform and Windows Server® 2003 as the operating system.

A Supplier with a Strong Future

Risk management was the primary reason for making the change, so support and reliability were crucial factors in selecting Microsoft Dynamics AX. “We had to find a product that we could rely on. We wanted to make sure we found and implemented a product that had a good future,” explains O’Connor. Microsoft’s commitment to the development and support of Microsoft Dynamics AX gave Champion the sense of security it needed. “We know that Microsoft has resources to support the system—and that they’ll provide a roadmap for future growth,” says O’Connor. This assurance, backed by the solid reputation of Microsoft, gave the company the protection it wanted.

An Expert Right Around the Corner

Champion also needed support from a reliable local partner who could provide personal service and support in addition to deep expertise with Microsoft Dynamics AX and the Microsoft Windows® operating system. “We found that we had a terrific, growing local Microsoft partner, Sunrise Technologies, five minutes from our office,” says O’Connor. Sunrise Technologies is part of a large network of Microsoft-certified partners who specialize in Microsoft Dynamics AX . For Champion Industries, this is a welcome change from the lack of support options with BPCS.

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Jack O'Connor, Director of Planning and Technology, Champion Industries

Champion contacted Sunrise Technologies to discuss options and later selected Sunrise to deploy and support Microsoft Dynamics AX. O'Connor also notes that since deploying Microsoft Dynamics AX, Champion requires less support and troubleshooting than before, but, he adds, "It's good to have Sunrise so close and accessible when the need does arise."

Flexible Capabilities

Champion Industries uses Microsoft Dynamics AX to run critical aspects of its operations, including finance, manufacturing, and supply chain management. Of the 12 modules Champion uses, it discovered some of the most impressive capabilities in the Trade module. The company can initiate purchase orders from production orders, sales orders, or inventory coverage rules, as well as create direct links to the sales order, thus supporting just-in-time purchasing for customer requirements.

Another feature of the Trade module, Intercompany, offers Champion Industries real-time creation and updates of intercompany sales orders from purchase orders and vice versa. Intercompany allows the exchange of information between companies, subsidiaries, and distribution centers. These features in the Trade module enable Champion Industries to enter and process orders 60 percent faster and with less legwork. According to O'Connor, "Once deployed, Microsoft Dynamics AX allowed us to streamline the sales order process with easier manipulation in order entry and enabled us to seamlessly print orders to the stockroom printer two buildings away. With Microsoft Dynamics AX, we can enter orders more quickly and we don't need to physically deliver them to the other building."

Plans for the Future

The flexibility and scalability of Microsoft Dynamics AX help ensure that Champion's IT

investment will continue to pay off as the company grows and its needs change. Champion has licensed two other Microsoft Dynamics AX add-on features, Balanced Scorecard and Enterprise Portal, for future implementation:

- **Balanced Scorecard**—This feature provides business intelligence and reporting that gives key decision makers better visibility into company performance and enables more informed decisions.
- **Enterprise Portal**—This feature provides employees, customers, vendors, and other partners with Web browser access to Microsoft Dynamics AX data and tools, even when off premises. Enterprise Portal deploys quickly and allows multiple locations to access data from a single database, which makes it easy and inexpensive to maintain across the organization.

Infrastructure Integration

As Champion migrates more of its infrastructure to the Windows operating system, integration between Microsoft Dynamics AX and other Microsoft technologies will allow the company to derive additional value from its ERP system.

Migrating messaging systems from Lotus Notes and eMail to Microsoft Exchange Server 2007 and Microsoft Office Outlook® 2007 will enable Champion employees to synchronize appointments, tasks, and contacts between Office Outlook and Microsoft Dynamics AX. As a result, any change a user makes in one program is automatically reflected in the other program, providing users with the latest information.

Champion will deploy Microsoft SQL Server 2005 in 2007 to provide additional reliability and security for its business-critical data and to help IT managers work more efficiently with improved performance and backup features. These features will make it easier to

maintain the system and keep it running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Familiar Environment for Ease of Use

The intuitive organization and familiar interface of Microsoft Dynamics AX helped Champion effect a remarkably easy transition, especially among users who were nervous about switching from a legacy system that had been in place for more than 15 years. “Users who were already familiar with the Microsoft Office programs picked up Microsoft Dynamics AX very quickly; the remainder of employees found the program easy to learn with minimal training,” O’Connor reports. “We’ve found broad and wide acceptance with everyone who was already familiar with the user interface.”

Sunrise Technologies provided training for the core project team. The team trained most end users, with Sunrise adding specialized training for other users who needed it. Champion is very pleased with the high adoption rate for Microsoft Dynamics AX.

Benefits

This new solution reduces time needed for order entry and processing significantly. Microsoft Dynamics AX is ideal for midsize manufacturers like Champion Industries, so when Champion implemented the new solution, they found they could use a single system for many business-critical functions, including finance, manufacturing, and supply chain management. And with the increased level of support and reliability, Champion felt secure doing just that.

Reliable

With a more dependable solution and the support of a local Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, support is needed less often and is more accessible when necessary. “Sunrise was and is an excellent business partner,” notes O’Connor. “The product itself we found

to be very reliable, so our need for support and service has diminished.”

Efficient

Champion Industries is seeing measurable results in the sales order process. Orders can be entered and processed 60 percent faster through Microsoft Dynamics AX, saving employee hours and related costs.

Adaptable

As Champion continues to grow, the Microsoft Dynamics AX system will grow with the company. Champion Industries can use the features that they need now and deploy additional functionality, such as the Balanced Scorecard and Enterprise Portal, as business needs change. The ability to add functionality to the core ERP system helps ensure that the company will not need to replace the Microsoft Dynamics AX system anytime soon.

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

www.microsoft.com

For more information about Champion Industries products and services, call (336) 661-1556 or visit the Web site at:

www.championindustries.com

For more information about Sunrise Technologies products and services, call (336) 722-6741 or visit the Web site at:

www.sunriseconsult.com

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to:

www.microsoft.com/dynamics

For more information about Microsoft in Manufacturing go to:

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Software and Services

- Microsoft Dynamics
 - Microsoft Dynamics AX
- Microsoft Office System
 - Microsoft Office Outlook 2007
- Microsoft Servers
 - Microsoft Exchange Server 2007
 - Microsoft SQL Server 2000
 - Windows Server 2003

Partners

- Sunrise Technologies